

KONFLIKT IN THE KINO

Issue 8

When pictures and sound collide there are fatalities

I'm Cuckoo ...over Koo Stark!



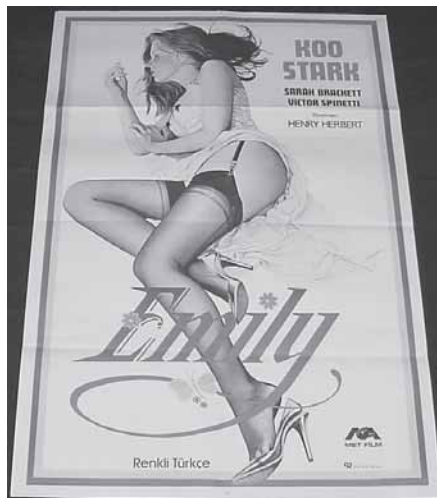
The best time of English cinema was the late sixties and seventies. The country seemed to crank out cheesy, cheeky low budget pictures faster than it would take to learn the lyrics of the SEX PISTOLS "God Save The Queen". Britain hit such a high on such lowbrow cinema.

The late '50s and '60s did have its fair share of tacky nudist colony pics mixed in with bad "Carry On" movies (which are badly in need of a resurgence), but the UK hit its stride in cinema in the late sixties and seventies with tons of comedic, tacky, kitschy soft core films rammed into the seedy theatres of Piccadilly and Soho. It might be poorly written, but the book "Doing Rude Things" by David McGillivray shows the steady progression of Britain's "knickers in a knot" cinema.

Some of the stars of these films (usually comedies) now have big cult followings. Robin Askwith, besides being in the infamous "Horror Hotel", starred in almost any movie beginning with "Confessions of a...". The SEX PISTOLS sang about Mary Millington. But they still don't steal my heart like Koo Stark.

Koo Stark was born April 26, 1956 in New York as Kathleen Dee-Anne Stark. In her early teen years, she had small bit parts in films such as the Rocky Horror Picture Show (she was in the wedding party of Betty Monroe at the beginning) plus Star Wars (later cut). Her father put her in a series of two cheesy low-grade UK sex films at the tender age of 17, with the notorious films both lensed in 1977.

As a kid, I saw clips of "Emily" on an Electric Blue videotape. Koo is in the shower with some woman who says "How does it feel?" as Koo answers, "Beautiful! Just like rain!" You can't get any better dialogue than that! Years later before finding an actual video copy, I screened a super 8 digest version from England of "Emily" to some friends. The plot deals with Koo coming back from a finishing school to discover that Mommy is a prostitute. Some "schoolboy" tries making the moves on her but



who does she end up cutting the custard with? Some old geezer who looks like he mulled off the set of "On The Buses"! Unlike many of the pictures coming out of Britain, this one tried being serious, and was tacky, but still enjoyable. Koo has really cool eyes!

"Justine" (also called "Cruel Intentions") is a film based on the writings by the Marquis De Sade. Need I tell you more? Not particularly sexy (even if it shows two nuns engaged in lesbian activity), but still, Koo was in it. And despite being in such schlock, her acting was okay. Both films were released and quickly forgotten.

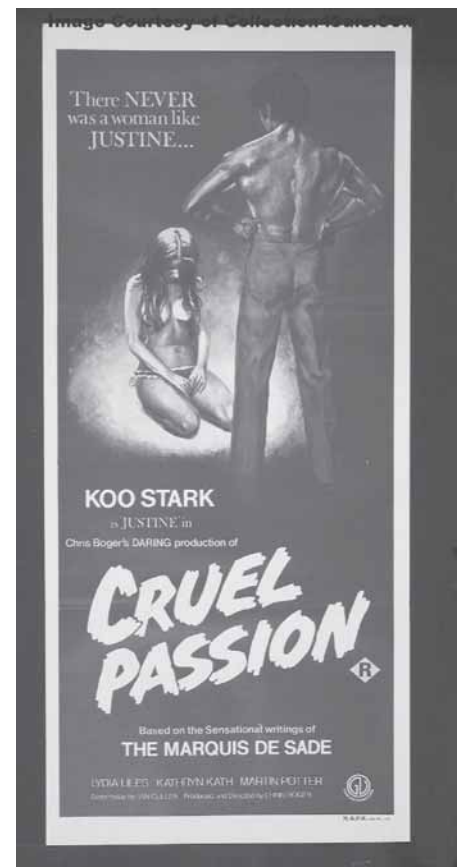
But when Koo Stark made the headlines for dating Prince Andrew in the early '80s, it made her previous celluloid efforts fair game for moneymaking types. Quickly cheapo video manufacturers rounded up her films to the

public, trying to find out more about this girl who turned Prince Andrew into "Randy Andy". Randy Andy's tryst with Koo was fairly brief, as I'm sure he caved in to public pressure and married that future Weight Watchers guru, Sarah Ferguson. Thanks, Britain. Thanks a lot!

KOO STARK and THROBBING GRISTLE albums might be some of the few good things about Britain, along with their cheeky '70s sex comedies. Koo Stark authored a book in the Eighties titled "Koo Stark: Photography", demonstrating her impeccable talent for capturing "a day in the life of" type photos, with the NFB Canadian '50s feel. Nowadays, she often has assignments in places such as Kenya, and rumors have floated around that she and Prince Andrew will meet up from time to time to "capture photos". A recent photo of her on a UK TV guide still has her looking graceful and stunning.

Of everyone in the Brit boobie movie industry, Koo went from period "ogling" pieces to legit acting (Electric Dreams and Red Dwarf), to becoming a successful photographer. One time a friend's cousin was here from England. She wrote on a postcard back home "Met a bloke that loves Koo Stark and S-Club 7."

Who doesn't?



SKRATCHEZ FROM THE EDITOR

Y'know, I don't publicly like to "bad mouth" anyone or a group, but something happened yesterday that kind of ticked me off.

CIUT 89.5 FM sponsored tonight's screening and I went by to promote it on Sunday to the Equalizing Distort show, left out some flyers, and put up a couple of posters. The next day, I was to return to the station and be a guest on "Ska Party". Upon returning to the station the next day, I noticed that my flyers had been replaced by another film festival (one of a million in Toronto) beginning on the same day (which will remain nameless).

Now I could be wrong. Maybe throngs of people entering CIUT have seen the light. Torontonians say, "Why, THE TOMCAT sounds like a much better picture than KANGAROO JACK! Honey, call a babysitter! Let's go!" But it seemed fishy that the said film festival (or the person doing promotion for it) decided to "eliminate" the competition by yanking the promotional material for it from the station (that sponsored the screening).

One could go on about tactics like these (and just posterizing etiquette in Toronto as a whole), but I honestly just think it's pretty weak. This same film festival, during an interview with them years back, asked me if I had any experience with film (not looking at my resume seeing I've studied, worked and had my own screenings). The interviewer asked me what "educational and industrial films" were.

When other people trash promotional work (meaning DESTROY), who wins? It's a case of "what goes around comes around", and they will get their "just desserts" in time. I could have thrown all their printed flyers in the trash, but didn't. Their promotional material remains where *Conflict Archive* stuff once was. Whatever!

Now to focus on the real news. I've started doing writing for another publication called *Anokhi Vibe*. It caters to the South Asian diaspora, but it's just good for "hip urban people" in my books. And hey, there's the sexiest photo ever of J-Lo on the cover! You can grab it across North America at better book and magazine stores, or check out their website at www.anokhivibe.com

Also, I'd love to tell you what our next screening is, but as we write *Festival* is still trying to pen a date. But you can always know what the *Conflict Archives* is up to by signing up for our e-mail announcements by dropping us a line at eurocoleco@hotmail.com. Don't miss out on the rarest in grade Z cinema, contests and special offers. I'd like to hear from you. Just like Circle Square! ;)



Hullu kanadalainen ihmettelee maailman menoa. Nelisivuinen newsletter. Yksi nro 60 sentin postimerkillä. Kaksi nroa 90 sentin postimerkillä. 1.30 euron merkillä jo monta.

**Konflikt in the Kino (Suomi);
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KONFLIKT IN THE KINO

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To be added to the Conflict Archives e-mail list (it's cool), or to comment/argue about the screenings/KITK, talk about Janne Tulkki entertaining troops in Iraq, or anyone that has a VHS copy of "Copper Mountain", contact us at:

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This issue is dedicated to "FIX SIGNS"

KhHO ctepeo = Stereo Kino

A visit to a Russian 3-D Cinema

St. Petersburg, Russia ... August 2000...

It's a sunny day when Igor, Katja and I hop into the BMW and drive deep into the heart of downtown St. Petersburg to Nevsky Prospekt. Usually the windows are down in Igor's cherry red BMW as the breeze blows through my brush cut while we listen to the radio. The street is alive with activity as we find a place to park, and hit the various shops and restaurants. My North American friends must tire of hearing about my travels in Europe, as they tend to sound like mixes of bohemian journeys combined with the Duran Duran "Rio" video. No joke.

Anyhow, we start walking along Nevsky, stopping at every record shop in case there's a CD that I might need to add to the 50 or so in my carry-on already. One thing that does catch my eye is the various theatres showing "Times Square" type screenings. "Alien Resurrection" was playing at one theatre with a large hand-painted poster marquee. That was cool. Drew Barrymore's "Doppelganger" was playing at another on a triple feature with some other forgettable flick and a German softcore film. Igor, Katja and I look at movie marquees between shopping for compact discs, with pit stops at the various ice cream stands on every street corner. There is plenty to see along Nevsky Prospekt. But one movie poster and cinema pops out at me. A picture might not be worth a thousand words, but this one had me gripped by its Cyrillic type.

"Igor! What type of movie is showing here?" I ask him, eyeballing the painted poster.

"This is, how do you say, a movie in stereo. Things come out at you."

"You mean, 3-D?"

"Yes"

That settled that! I told him at some point I wanted to go. And one day, we grabbed our tickets for a screening of, as the ticket lady told us, "A very good science fiction movie" (in 3-D). I think we paid 40 rubles each for the tickets. There was a bit of time before the film, so we went into a cool video store adjacent to the cinema. I bought Igor and Katja a copy of "Pinocchio's Revenge", a good cheapo horror movie and some videos for me. Now onto the movie....

With a video camera in hand, I do yet another on-camera interview with Igor and Katja and film us going into the theatre. My Russian friends seem to be totally used to the camera now and answer the stupid questions that I seem to pull out of the Neva River or something. Who knows!

The cinema itself isn't exactly on Nevsky. The marquee is, the posters, but you basically go through this little archway that seems



The poster marquee outside of the theater.



Russian lovers Igor and Katja enter the world of 3-D.

more Italian than Russian to this back lot. I notice while filming, there's a cat standing in a puddle. Igor and Katja are holding hands as we approach the cinema, at this point, it's time to turn the camera off.

As we enter the lobby, the 3-D kino isn't selling popcorn or any tasty "bubbly chocolate" from Moscow, but instead CD-ROMs! Oddly, I buy one obvious pirate of "Goth Favorites" for 60 rubles. We go up the stairs and slide on the hard 3-D glasses (not the cardboard kind) and sit in the leather seating of the cinema.

The film starts. The print is a little scratchy, but who cares when you're seeing polarized 3-D in Russia! IN 2000!!! It takes a second for me to realize the film I've seen as a young kid in Oshawa in its original run. This (as the ticket lady said) "very good science-fiction film" was none other than "Metalstorm: The Destruction of Jared Syn" with Kelly Preston! And better yet, it wasn't subtitled, but voiced over, in Russian.

METALSTORM details a miner in the space age. What he's mining for? Who knows? My recollection of it was pretty hazy as a kid and didn't get any better seeing it in Russian. The one thing I did notice is how good the 3-D seemed. It was allllll good. Or so I thought! Igor taps me on the shoulder and whispers, "Dion, Katja says this isn't very good and wants to leave."

I flat out lie, "Tell her it's only 5 more minutes!"

Well, the film is still pretty short, but the minutes drag on as we watch this wanna be MAD-MAX 3-D opus. Igor sometimes uses the expression, "What a crap" and this time, he might have been right. Truthfully, the film would make so little sense in spots; I'd just start giggling. So my review of the Russian version of "Metalstorm"? It's fantastic.

After the film, we hand over the plastic glasses to an old lady by the exit as we get blasted by the sunlight during the day (the same film running constantly all day). Others in the cinema are taking photos with the funny glasses. I'm hoping Katja won't scream at me too much for dragging her and Igor to see such fine fare. If memory serves me right, I'm sure we got ice cream or borscht afterwards. One or the other.

Last week I called Igor. He asks if I'm coming over this summer, how work is, and if I'm writing more. I tell him about doing an article about the 3-D kino. He tells me it's still going. I almost want to ask him if he has been lately, but I know that's something he will entertain only if some Canadian film guy visits.

...And I remember my trip, all over again. It still seems vivid, and full of depth. Just like going to the Stereo Kino on Nevsky Prospekt.



Way back in Issue #1 of KONFLIKT IN THE KINO, I reviewed a CD by Canada's Ricky J, titled "Lose Control", and I gave it a pretty good review. Also in the first issue of KONFLIKT IN THE KINO, I reviewed a Dolph Lundgren film. People lambasted me for both. Eventually Ricky J hit the charts here with his track "No Means No" (one of my students can sing it verbatim) which climbed up the charts. In the Canadian world of musical artists, it seems you get tarred and feathered from the word go. The first image and sound of an artist seems to burn into the consciousness of the average consumer. Growth is not encouraged. Musically, the Canadian music industry embraces the "one trick ponies" of music. Let's consider: when I think back on the first issue of KONFLIKT IN THE KINO, I think of how rotten it would be if the current editions were like the very first one, and how I've luckily grown. Ricky J has grown too. His new album is "White Boys", which has been released as an indie on Evolution Records. He talked to KONFLIKT IN THE KINO about stereotyping, Shawn Desman, rebuilding, and Joe Millionaire!

KONFLIKT IN THE KINO (Dion Conflict): Salut Ricky J.... How you doin', Juggalo?

RICKY J: I am cool. Just doing my thing.

Why don't you introduce yourself to the readers of KONFLIKT IN THE KINO and tell us what you do.

Well - all in all I am a rapper/ entertainer/club MC/starting to dabble in music production. And so on.

So, I first heard of you because of the Energizer Battery promotion that tied in with your first album "Lose Control"... What did you think of your album being tied in with batteries?

I didn't think much of it - was cool to have a big name sponsor like Energizer to help out with costs, and I got some free batteries (*laughs*). But I don't think it was such a massive big deal and I never really thought much of it.

"Lose Control" was your first album. After everything got mixed, etc, what did you think of it?

Well, at the end of the day you are your own worst critic - but I liked it - I did think the material was kind of dated and the material although was good, it was old. It was almost 2 - 3 years old before the album ever came out. So to me I was like, "well, this sounds like the old me," but I had already signed a one album

agreement and well, we make our beds and we all have to lie in it. I can sit here and say well, it should of gone like this or - it's their fault, but I will sit here like a grown man and take my lumps and move on. I am like that - I do not dwell on the past unlike other people in this world.

To me, "Lose Control" had this kind of mid 70's JACKSONS sound, mixed with early GRANDMASTER / the GAP BAND. Was any of the early breakdance funk an influence on what you were trying to create?

Well, a lot of the vision on the first album was a vision that my main producer at the time had, and I trusted in him, and so we went with that old school sample vibe. I did like some of the old jacks we took from, but like I said that album was done 2 - 3 years before it saw daylight, and so to me that kind of style or vibe was played out by the time we hit stands. But people still bought it.

Your video for "No means No " is quite notorious in ways....

I guess for me, I can only say that I wasn't too fond of that video - at the time I was excited to have a music video and I was happy to be doing a video, but in a way I think that video did more damage than good in the long run. Some

people liked it and yeah, it was a little funny with me on roller skates - but it didn't reflect the real me. And I think that was a real problem. But we all make our mistakes and we move on and learn from our mistakes. But yes, it is a little notorious.

And the new album... It's called "White Boys" and you're now with an independent record label. How do you feel about being on an "indie"?

Well I have more freedom and I have more concentration on my project. I think it is a little harder being on an indie but I feel like we are all a tight family. Like being in a major is great sometimes but it's like a way too big family - sometimes you get forgotten or sometimes you get treated wrongly and sometimes nobody listens. So right now the indie I am with has a lot of heart and soul for my project and they believe in me. Yeah, indies don't always have the most money like the majors and indies don't always have the money to buy their way in to things, and yeah, it is harder and sometimes you gotta pull your own sleeves up and help out with stuff but I like that - I learn more and I have more control on an indie.

What's the big difference between "White Boys" and "Lose Control" ?

Two way different albums - "White Boys" is all fresh and new, and I got what I wanted on this new album. I got the club stuff and the radio stuff. I think of it as my first real album. This shows I have grown and that people don't really know me or my music. "White Boys", the album is really all about the music and less about the image. That is why we don't have any picture on the cover. I think if people try and forget about what they think I am about and peep this new album they may be surprised.

Have any French or French Canadian artists been an influence on you such as Muzion or MC Solaar?

No, not really cause I am not a French artist. I think those artists are good and all but I have had more influence from cats like LL COOL J - RUN DMC - the GAP BAND - MICHAEL JACKSON - and so on.

Do you think the majority of the Canadian public or media has pigeon-holed you? If so, in what way?

I think yes... I think people in Canada judge a book by its cover way too fast and people here don't always stay with the book and read the whole book, or shit, they don't even get past the cover. I think we in the music biz here in Canada are trend followers and not setters. Canadians pay more attention to Canadians that blow up in the States, rather than pay attention to what is poppin' up in our own backyard. Many groups have been ignored in the past in Canada and yet when they blew up in the States, Canada was wrapping all Canadian flags around these artists and then paying attention. People saw me as some flash in the pan - some Vanilla Ice - but those cats are all wrong and don't have any clue what I am about. OK, my first single



was more poppy than hip hop. But a lot of that was due to the fact that the label wanted more of a watered down mix and so on, and I didn't have much of a choice at the time. In this world you gotta do what you gotta do sometimes. But as watered down as my single was I was still the first Canadian rapper to be in top 20 billboards radio. And no matter what people say rap is rap, whether it be Will Smith or N.O.R.E. - so at the end of the day I am still a rapper, no matter what people say. But I still don't feel I represented hip hop well with my old material. And this new album most def has hip hop elements, but when you really think of it a lot of artists do different things from the start of their career. Look at EVERLAST - he was all clean rappin' in a suit and then he grew up and boom was a different cat when he was in HOUSE OF PAIN. Look at how poppy MADONNA was - shit, MICHAEL JACKSON even did dance/disco. My point is people have to let me grow and that is what I am doin'. Canada holds people down no doubt - it's like they get one idea of you and that is it, you are branded for life. I am not trying to be anybody but myself. But for real in this world people will always try and hold you down. People will always try and talk trash and put you down. So will I be able to eliminate haters? Nah, that will always exist - but I do want people that may not be fond of me from past to at least listen to the album on a whole and then talk. Then if they still ain't feeling it or if I am still not "a real hip hop artist" to them in their minds (the haters that is) they can at least

Zellers?? I don't really step there much. Maybe my momz, but not me.

say "yeah he is doing his thing and he does it well." I am not askin' people to like me. I am not begging. I just want people to at least try to understand what I am trying to do. It's funny though - I have started to get more push and support from U.S. DJ's over Canadian DJ's - isn't that funny. But then there are cats that are supporting me like KISS 92 - FLOW - VIBE - KISS 96.9 - THE BEAT - WILD 101 - HOT 89.9 - MTV Canada - Much Music - and so on.

Would you do a concert with Shawn Desman? Have you guys ever met?

Well I don't know him - concert? Depends on the cash. Nah, seriously, I don't know him - and well we never met. We've been in the same building but he ain't never shown his face in front of mine. And although I have heard he been sayin' shit about me, and his label I hear from various sources I have - well, I hear they have both tried to put me down to media and so on *of course these are just rumours* (his emphasis), but well, I got a sour taste in my mouth right now to be frank. I don't like people that can't say shit to your face. But if the rumors are just rumors then there ain't no beef. But he never has called my peeps to put me on a remix or nuttin. And I am a good MC. I can hold my own for real. I wish every artist the best - I want Canadians to succeed. I am not a hater like that. But I am a straight shooter so if you cross my path and I catch ya talkin trash well we gunna have to square off. I am not a violent person but I am not into fake people and I am not into kissing ass. I am a pretty cool guy but don't cross me. As for a show, well depends on

what all the details are. I hear he puts on a good show. So for me to be on a show with another artist that puts on a good show yeah, I guess I would.

Are you a vinyl junkie?

Vinyl? Well I used to be into vinyl. When I was in high school. But now no, I am more a MC than a DJ or vinyl collector..

KONFLIKT IN THE KINO talks a lot about fucked up film, so why don't you tell our readers what type of films you like.

Umm - I am a movie fanatic. I love all kinds of movies. I can't narrow it all down - I can say I like drama - action - comedy - sci fi - and adventure. *I like good movies* (emphasis) to make it more simple. (Ed Note: Then Ricky J would love *Conflict Archive* screenings! LOL!)

Speaking of movies, Y'know, I wrote this part for you in mind for this low budget 35mm "sex comedy" (not porn) not long ago. And it's in 3-D! Have you acted before?

Yeah, I was in a play years ago and was also into modeling as a kid and in high school I was all up in the drama class getting like 75% -95% and have been blessed to know a few known actors as well. And also in some of the music videos I have done a little acting as needed.

You're going to be MC'ing a bit in Southern Ontario?

Yea I am workin' on a few events. I will be headin' to Niagara Falls to do like a mini show and then probably hit a few clubs in Toronto and do the MC thing. I like being a hype man at parties - fun.

What do you know about Finland?

Umm - well not all that much. I know Finland (Finnish name Suomi) is a republic which became a member of the European Union in 1995. Its population is 5.2 million. The capital Helsinki has 560,000 residents. Finland is an advanced industrial economy. The sun does not set for about 73 days, producing the white nights of summer. In the same region, during the dark winter period, the sun remains below the horizon for 51 days, creating the polar night known in Finnish as kaamos.

Would you ever have sex with any of the girls off of JOE MILLIONAIRE?

Umm-yeah, I think that kinky one Sarah. She's going to be in Playboy, but there was this good looking black girl that got out early in the game that I would take a closer look at. (Ed Note: Who wouldn't let Sarah give 'em a spankin!)

What's the last thing you bought at Zellers?

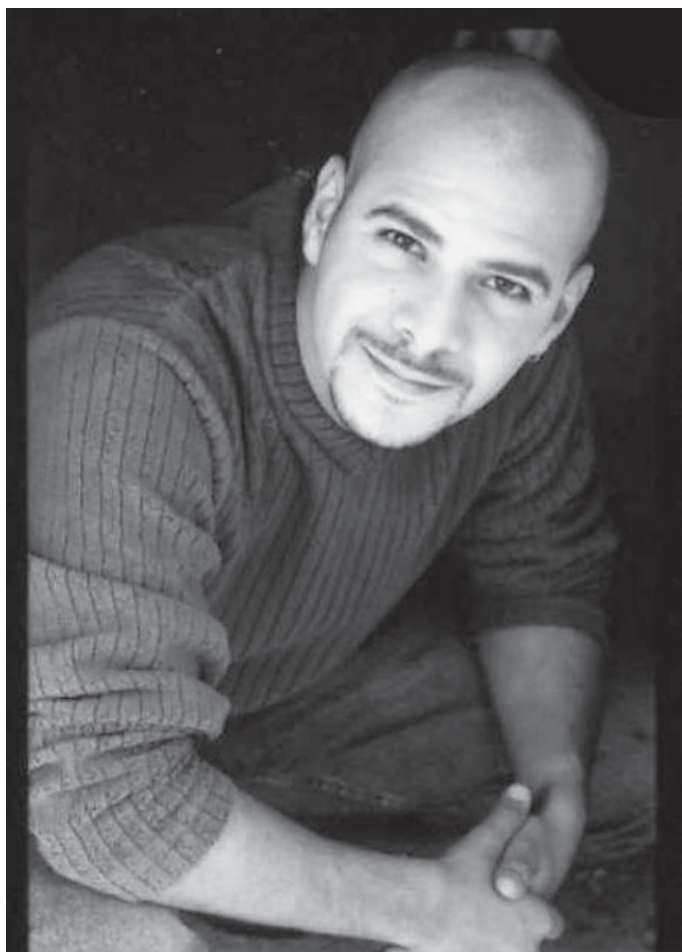
Zellers?? I don't really step there much. Maybe my momz, but not me. (laughs)

Thanks Ricky J - got any parting words for our readers?

Well, just keep your ears out and don't judge a book by its cover. Let's stop hating on each other and just do what you love to do in life. Make sure what ever you do in life is enjoyable and once that one thing stops being enjoyable move on and do what ya gotta do.

He wouldn't tell me about this play he did, but I'd still put him in my 3-D movie. His new album "White Boys" is in stores now.

3 QUESTIONS _____



Pat Mastroianni: Give Joey Jeromiah a “Pat” on the back!

If ever there was a bona-fide worldwide cult-status show made in Canada, it would be Degrassi, and all its spawns (High, Jr. High, Talks, movies, Next Generation). When I worked for the Durham Board of Education, I would have to dub copy after copy of Degrassi Jr. High (especially the one where Stephanie’s Mom finds out she dresses like a “floozie”)*.

Pat Mastroianni, played “Joey Jeromiah”, the guy in Zit Remedy, who streaked through the halls, and had so many ups and downs with his relationship with Kaitlin, Judge Judy wouldn’t even know the verdict. I’m sure he has answered the same Degrassi questions over and over, so I stayed away from them.

Anyhow, Pat is currently living in Toronto. He’s an Ebay junkie. He recently got married. He’s on TV yakking about nutrition. And he’s now on DEGRASSI: A NEW GENERATION, which airs Sunday nights on CTV.

At one time for a Finnish publication, Pat wanted me to re-use quotes from another interview he did. Tisk, tisk Pat. For some reason, I don’t think they would ever have the 3 QUESTIONS we were looking for.

KonFlikt in the Kino / Dion Conflict (Question #1):

Pat, a lot of people wouldn’t know it, but you did a part in “Godzilla”. How did that happen and tell us about acting in a very big Hollywood blockbuster.

Big blockbuster, right! It was my first audition with my first agent in

L.A and I was trying to get an opportunity to meet and greet with casting directors. I got the role, no big deal, and I spent 4 days sitting around the set. Finally my part came up and it ended up on the editing floor. Something to do with showing the lead character Godzilla more, must have been in his contract. My friends laugh and so do I at the fact that my name in the end credits lasted longer than my face did in the movie. I did however make a ton of cash doing it so I wish the movie was a hit. If you can make that kind of cash in a crappy movie like Godzilla, man - imagine what an extra made in Titanic?

KITK (Question #2):

Okay Pat, at this point of time, Canada is having very little to do with the war in Iraq. Let’s say the Prime Minister of Canada, Jean Chretien, asks if you would go over and entertain troops. Now, technically you can say yes or no. If you go, you are given some options of how to entertain the Americans. You could either do “Survivor! The Musical!” with the Olsen girls and adult superstar, Jeanna Fine. The other thing is to do a puppet show with Canadian figure skater Elvis Stojko. The PM is letting you direct the shows too. So the question is, if you do a show in Iraq for American troops, which will you choose and what will be the artistic plan?

Those are good suggestions but a little advanced for our American friends. I think I would have to do a little remake of Mr. Dress-up, that’s more down to their level of understanding. I would start with a little song and them help teach them to make crafts so that they can better protect themselves. Then I would let Casey and Finnigan go out there and kick some bootay. (Ed Note: Suomi: Mr. Dressup = Teletappit)

KITK (Question # 3):

Did you have a favorite K-Tel record growing up? If so explain what it was and tell me a story of how it came to play (no pun intended) in your life.

I don’t think this record was K-Tel but my first album I ever bought was the “Happy Days” soundtrack with the Fonz on the cover. EHHHH! I still have it, and I do enjoy a little rock around the clock some-times. Then I went to Columbia House, UGHHH! Never again. “Hey get your friends to join and we will give you 2 free tapes while we gouge everyone you know”. I still don’t talk to some of my cousins.

Ed Note: ...Actually Pat, the “Happy Days” vinyl LP I believe came out on Juke-box International! LOL! Thanks again to Pat for taking some time to answer our “3 Questions”. For more info on Pat, go to www.patmeup.com.

Endnote: * “Floozie” is a word I’m trying to use a lot more often. You should too. Add it to your conversation today!

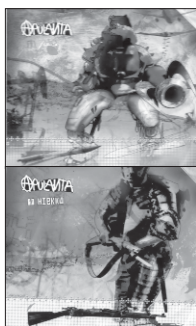


EQUALIZING DISTORT on CIUT 89.5 FM - Sunday nights from 10:00pm - midnight (Hosts: Martin Farkas, Simon Harvey, Stephe Perry, and Mark Rodenhizer). The show dedicates itself to the underground hardcore punk scene. There is a particular emphasis on international releases in the developing thrash, power violence, straight edge, grind, burning spirits, garage, Killed By Death, and d-beat scenes, which means we play material like the El Camino53, They Live, Unity, Gritos de Alerta, Framtid, Riot Star, RPA, and Blood Spit Nights. There is a weekly demo feature (paying homage to the cassette format), weekly event listings, and a monthly top 10 retrospective look at new releases. Contact: 91 St. George Street / Toronto, ON / M5S 2E8 / Canada / e-mail: equalizingxdistort@ciut.fm / Webcast: www.ciut.fm.

junk

APULANTA "Jumala" / "Hiekka"
Levy-Yhtiö (Finland)

As my mouth waters for the new album from APULANTA, Hannele mailed me 2 singles to tide me over. And they seem to be back on track from kind of a forgettable last album. "Jumala" has the title track (which is good) along with "Avaruuden Syklissä", which has rip-off chords from THE CLASH's "London Calling". "Hiekka" contains 3 tracks, with the excellent title track reminding me of the "Kanne se pois" phase of the band, and "Paska Meininki" bringing the speed of the "Kolme" album. Two decent singles by a mainstay of Finnish music. But if you're going to only get one of the two, get "Hiekka"!



MARISKA "Toisin Sanoen"
Warner Music Finland

For the public looking for female Finnish freestyle rap, here comes Mariska! She whines her name often in the first track, "Tarkasta Tama", but eventually it got better. Actually, "Matematikkaa" with its cascading Liberate sample was excellent, but "Balladi", is just that... a bad ballad. Her rapping sometimes reminds me of Vera Holthaus from Germany's "Basis" (who is really good). "Toisin" is an OK first album by the dreadlock rapping Mariska, who pretty much tries to rap to whatever they throw her way. So what do I think of it? Well, I can say it's better than the first full length FINTELLIGENS album, if that tells you anything!



THE FIVE SENSES (Canada 1999)
Starring: Mary Louise-Parker, Gabrielle Rose
Director: Jeremy Podeswa

This was my first introduction to the work of director Jeremy Podeswa, who seems to have his films here in Canada marketed as 2nd rate Egoan films. But I primarily picked this one up at the Pacific Mall on a fluke. Actually, it's an engaging little film about how one of the five senses each overpowers the perception of, and how they interact with others. Gabrielle Rose (who is in lots of Egoan films) gives a fine performance as a massage therapist. A child goes missing... A voyeur gets turned onto drag... One man is losing his hearing and makes a list of things he wants to hear before that happens. The film is quite good, and it's too bad that it didn't get proper promotion so people actually would take notice of it. Use your sense of touch to go grab a copy of this, and check it out yourself.



HEAVEN OR VEGAS (1997)
Starring: Richard Grieco, Yasmine Bleeth
Director: Gregory C. Haynes

You're not going to believe what I'm going to say, but this easily could go in my "top 10" list of '90s sleeper films. You might think that with Richard Grieco and Yasmine Bleeth at the helm, it will be some made-for-video trash. It's not. Rachel (Bleeth), cocaine addicted stripper/hooker with a penchant for fairy tales meets gigolo Navy (Grieco) who wants to go to Montana. Rachel follows and takes him to Utah for a quick pit stop where she returns to her remarried Mormon father and odd "goody goody" stepsisters. With her past life too much to bear, Rachel wants to leave, but Navy wonders if this was the "Montana" he was looking for. Bleeth and Grieco give fine performances, and the cinematography is excellent with many medium shots used because the actors can carry the emotions without the audience being "fed" them by the use of close ups. HEAVEN OR VEGAS has the feel of films such as "Tender Mercies" or "What's Eating Gilbert Grape", just telling a simple, interesting story. I love it!



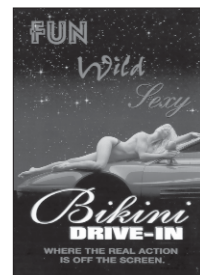
CRAZY FOR PIG-BONE IN POT (Hong Kong 2001)
Starring: So Chi Wai, Chung kit Yee
Director: Wai Ying Yip

Yes folks, it's a real movie! Lau Ho Yin (So Chi Wai) loses his money to some party girls in a bar, and after he runs out of money for his cab ride, he finds himself in a "rich neighbourhood." He sneaks into a house, makes his favourite dish "pig bone in pot", but then everyone starts coming home. It's "Home Alone", "Goldilocks and the Three Bears", and "Three's Company", all rolled into this cheapo, shot on video little Cantonese ditty. It takes awhile for the plot to cook up (sorry for the bad pun), but then begins to simmer. However the last 5 minutes should have been chucked in the editing bin, or in the pig bone pot. The VCD has a dual audio track, and English subtitles.



BIKINI DRIVE-IN (1995)
Starring: Ashlie Rhea, Richard Gabai
Director: Fred Olen-Ray / Steve Latshaw

How could a director get progressively worse over his career? Kim Taylor (Rhea) inherits her grandfather's old drive-in, which she needs to raise \$25,000 over a weekend or else evil J.B. Winston (notorious B-Movie producer Dave Friedman) will turn it into a mini-mall. It's a great, fun idea for a good B-Pic, but Olen-Ray just makes the film a mess. Actually Dave Friedman's acting is pretty good! Too bad he didn't do more when he was alive. It's a good idea for a film, but made into a piece of crap by a director that has done enough films that it should have been somewhat better than the turd-of-a-DVD it turned out to be. Look for Conrad Brooks (Plan 9 From Outer Space) who also appears.



BHH (USSR 1967)
Starring: Leonid Kuravlyov, Natalya Varley
Director: Georgi Kropachyov / Konstantin Yershov

I got to see "BHH" (Viy) finally at a screening at the Cinematheque, and shortly after my buddy Igor mailed me a copy from Russia. This classic horror tale tells of a priest who has an encounter with a witch one night on her broom, then is asked by local villagers to guard, and be in mourning over a corpse in a church, with only his faith to protect him. Locked inside with the body, all hell breaks loose as witches and demonic trolls get ready to attack him (and it's kind of scary!) Based on the story by Gogol, it's early Soviet horror at its finest. My DVD, (from Russia) looks beautiful, with subtitles in a zillion languages, and extras. But it's been since released in North America, and if you would like to see a classic spooky Mosfilm flick, check it out.



VARIOUS ARTISTS "All-Skanadian Club 4"
Stomp Records (Canada)

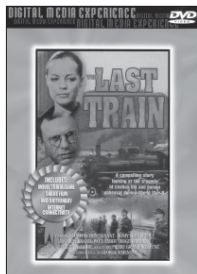
There's pictures of Skinheads bowling (kind of) on this fine 21-track Ska compilation with something for everyone. Highlights for sure would be KING KONQUEROR, MAD BOMBER SOCIETY, and TEN TOO MANY (with nice female vocals). SPINECRACKER sounds a little more "punk" than ska, but fuck it, it works for me. Where's FLASH-LIGHT? Anyhow, don't be rude, boi! Check it out for a nice taste of this and that in the world of Canadian ska.



THE LAST TRAIN (France 1973)
Starring: Jean Louis-Trintignant, Romy Schneider.
Director: Pierre Granier-Deferre

Known in France as "Le Train", this film details a radio-repairman (Louis-Tintignant) who flees from the Nazis with his family on a train heading

somewhere in France during WW2. He ends up mingling in the back car with Anna (the very talented Romy Schneider) as they search for some form of “freedom” on the trek to wherever they may be free, and in the process fall in love. This cheapie DVD (which you can buy on Ebay for about \$3.50) is a pretty decent flick, sadly dubbed, but tells this interesting story of a love that begins during turmoil. It’s not as excellent as Andrzej Wajda’s “Korczak”, but still not a bad film.



THE BASE II – GUILTY AS CHARGED (2000)

Starring: Antonio Sabato Jr, James Remar

Director: Mark L. Lester

Antonio Sabato Jr. goes from the Calvin Klein underwear model to “actor”. In this stupid flick, Sabato plays Lt. John Murphy, who goes undercover in the military to gather intelligence on a troop practicing their own brand of “kangaroo court”. Do I have to bother telling you any more about this dull turd? Trust me, there are more fascinating McDonald’s menus you’ve read. Antonio isn’t as bad of an actor as say, Madonna, but the whole production reeks of dirty Calvins with skids. It would be “guilty as charged” for amateur production, acting, script, EVERYTHING!



BACKSTREET BOYS “THE VIDEO HITS – CHAPTER ONE”

Jive

So shoot me. I like BSB. Oddly enough, I haven’t seen a lot of their videos, so I kind of looked forward to seeing this DVD. It has videos from their “Backstreet’s Back”, “Millennium” and “Black and Blue” albums, but totally forgot about their first album, which did spawn hits such as “Get Down”. Sure they looked geeky then, but why did they just skip over that album? So to call this complete is bullshit. But the videos for “The Call” and the *Universal Horror* feeling “Everybody (Backstreet’s Back)” are fun, but again I digress – I miss the first album. With it being such a shoddy collection of videos, it might appeal to those who just have too much money and don’t know what to spend it on.



THE DREAM IS ALIVE (1985)

Narrator: Walter Cronkite

Director: Graeme Ferguson

The Smithsonian, Lockheed Corporation and NASA helped make this IMAX short, now on DVD. In this documentary, we see spectacular views of our world, how the shuttle lands, etc. It loses its focus in the last third, but the film is made for people to look, not learn. Eerily, I picked this up one afternoon and while walking home noticed a TV turned to CNN which was reporting the “Columbia” Disaster. Creepy. Anyhow, you can find various IMAX films on DVD and tape now, which offer spectacular views of our world, better on the big screen, not bad on the small screen.

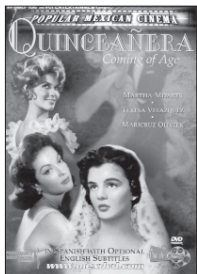


QUINCEANERA (Mexico 1960)

Starring: Martha Mijares, Teresa Velazquez, Maricruz Olivier

Director: Alfredo B. Crevenna

“Quinceañera” (Coming of Age) is the latest offering from VCI’s Mex-DVD line, and just like it’s trailer that appears on other Mex-DVDs, it doesn’t disappoint. Three girls from various socio-economic situations return to their parents, who are trying to plan their debutante party. Each of their girls has family struggles that interject onto their special occasion. Actress Maricruz Olivier kind of

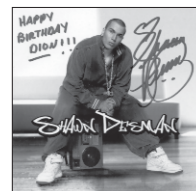


looks like a Mexican *Tori Spelling*! It’s a gritty little drama and as the trailer says, “Shows the bonding of the Mexican Family”. Excellent direction by Crevenna (who did tons of films) and the three female leads are all fantastic. Hopefully VCI releases more of these little known Mexican gems to the public.

SHAWN DESMAN – “s/t”

Vik Recordings

I heard of Shawn when I saw his Tia-Maria CD at Honest Ed’s next to some other Portuguese artists. He doesn’t sing in Portuguese on this CD, the one that made him sort of a household name in Canada. The intro is a little Leni Riefenstahl-esque, but he gives us 16 tracks of pop-influenced, watered down soul tracks. Some like “Shook” have so many harmony tracks, it could be compared to that Richard Carpenter’s “background of harmonies” - and even Shawn looks confused as to where to sing in his videos (look for yourself if you don’t believe me). It still works, but he can carry a tune on tracks such as “Better than Me” which are more stripped down (and quite a catchy pop track). It’s what it is (the album)... Good pop for the most part, when it’s just trying to be real instead of hip.



VIIMEINEN KOLONNA – “Aistien Johlaa”

Hardcore Holocaust Records

An American label put out this hardcore record by Helsinki’s Viimeinen Kolonna. Lots of echo thrown on the vocals of this speed metal (for the most part). “Näkemiin” has some great kids crying in it while the speed increases. But otherwise, I’m not much for the echo-based-thrash-black-metal stuff. You might be, and eat this up. Maybe someone in Finland might think this, but if you removed the guitar and drums, it would sound just like “Paska” (the performer). VIIMEINEN KOLONNA sound pretty mediocre, and “Aistien Johlaa” has been done by many bands before. Next!

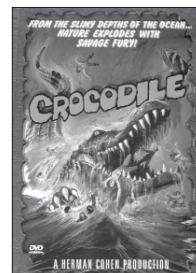


CROCODILE (1981 SOUTH KOREA/THAILAND)

Starring: Nat Puvanai

Director: Sompote Sands

It’s a Korean-Thai JAWS rip-off! Dr. Akom (with a huge sign on his desk to remind you it’s him) loses his family to a huge crocodile (you see lots of close ups of his eyes). He hires an “expert” to get rid of the amphibian Pac-man with the penchant for small Thai towns. Let me say, it’s not very good, but in some ways, it’s fascinating as it’s been ruined on so many levels, it runs like a surrealist “Jaws” copy. It should be offered to Ryerson film students to dissect and discover what or how it came to be “like this”. The DVD also includes radio spots for the film.



HOSTAGE HIGH (1997)

Starring: Rick Schroeder, Freddie Prinze, Jr.

Director: Michael Watkins

The Women’s Television Network ran this a couple months ago (??) and I since grabbed a copy on DVD (for cheap). Rick Schroeder goes back to his high school, disgruntled and armed with guns and bullets. He takes the high school over and grabs some kids as hostage (including Freddie Prinze, JR). Henry Winkler (Yes, the Fonz) is the negotiator. Based on a true story, this TV movie treads the normal lines, but Rick Schroeder does a really good job as deranged Jason Copeland, basically making the other cast weak at the knees with regard to their performances. He totally looks like he’s really going to lose it any minute. The DVD offers a “director’s cut” (really not too different from the TV version) and audio commentary by Winkler and some boring producer.

